

AGENDA ITEM IV

PROPOSED ACADEMIC/RESEARCH UNIT

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS

National Ports and Waterways Institute

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The National Ports and Waterways Institute is an existing research structure of Louisiana State University and A&M College. Last year, LSU and the University of New Orleans entered into discussions to effect a transfer of the Institute from LSU to UNO. In November, 2000, the LSU Board of Supervisors approved this transfer. As there are no provisions within Regents' Academic Affairs Policies and Guidelines for transfer of a research unit from one campus to another, the staff requested that the UNO provide an abbreviated proposal describing the specifics of their request. It is this request that is being considered today.

The Board of Regents' Guidelines for Proposed Centers, Institutes, and Other Similar Academic /Research Units provide two different review procedures for proposed new academic/research units, depending on the projected source of funding. For those proposed units which anticipate support from non-state sources, the Regents will consider a one-year period of conditional approval, prior to submittal of a full proposal. For those proposed units which anticipate support from state sources, a full proposal will have to be considered and approved, prior to receiving any state funds. As this is a preexisting research unit with significant State and external funding, UNO's request is for full approval.

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

1. Description

The Institute serves as a center for applied research, technical assistance and training in maritime transportation and port operations. It is dedicated to conducting economic and technical evaluations for planning ports and inland waterways as well as intermodal transportation systems. The NPWI, as appropriate to UNO, will provide essential support for economic development in the Greater New Orleans area. With New Orleans close proximity to the Gulf of Mexico, the Inter-Coastal Waterway, the Mississippi River, and other vital inland waterways, the NPWI objectives parallel the role, scope, and mission of UNO.

2. Need

The Institute is unique to Louisiana and a major asset to Louisiana maritime interests. The maritime

industry generates \$5 billion to the State's economy and supports 330,000 jobs statewide. The NPWI works with port authorities in Louisiana through the Port Association of Louisiana. There is a great need for strategic assessment/market analysis, port master planning and feasibility analysis, intermodal systems analysis, and inland waterways research.

3. Faculty

The Institute has five full-time professionals, representing UNO's Departments of Civil/Mechanical/Naval Architecture-Marine Engineering. In addition, there are additional seven other UNO faculty, representing the same departments as cited previously and including Environmental Engineering/Business/Economics/Urban-Public Affairs, who will also conduct research at the Institute.

4. Facilities and Equipment

The facilities consist of existing offices located at Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and Arlington, VA. The University does project the need for additional facilities or equipment. Any equipment needed in the future will be funded through external grants.

5. Administration

The proposed Institute will be administered by a Director who will be appointed and overseen by the Dean of the College of Engineering. The Dean has appointed Dr. Anatoly Hochstein, Professor of Civil/Environmental Engineering and Naval Architecture/Marine Engineering, to serve as Institute Director. He will be assisted by an Associate Director, Dr. Jay Jayawardan, Professor of Naval Architecture/Marine Engineering. The Director and Associate Director will be guided in their decisions by an external Advisory Committee composed of representatives from government, industry, and consulting firms.

6. Budget

The proposal provides the following budget summary:

	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>	<u>Year 4</u>	<u>Year 5</u>
Salaries	\$500,000	\$515,000	\$530,450	\$546,364	\$562,754
Fringe	105,000	108,150	111,395	114,736	118,178
Travel	60,000	61,800	63,645	65,564	67,531
Supplies	80,000	82,400	84,872	87,418	90,041
Equipment	40,000	41,200	42,436	43,706	45,020

Indirect	253,300	260,899	268,726	276,788	285,091
TOTALS	\$1,038,300	\$1,069,449	\$1,101,532	\$1,134,578	\$1,168,616

The Year 1 budget is based on existing research contracts with several companies and \$250,000 funding from the University Transportation Center. Subsequent year budgets are reasoned projections.

7. Contingency Budget Plans

Given the amounts of external support already available, the University does not project the need for contingency funding within the immediate future. UNO states “if for some unforeseen reason we should not be able to obtain adequate funding, we will shut down the NPWI.”

8. Length of Approval

UNO seeks full approval.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The purposes of the Institute are appropriate to the role, scope, and mission of UNO and its research program provides great service to the State. A need for the Institute is justified, faculty resources appear to be readily available, and the administrative structure is appropriate. The University has provided some internal resources to aid in initiating Institute operations, but all ongoing research activities are already supported through external grants and contracts. The breadth and depth of current external support and the rate of success for previous grant proposals bode well for future external funding.

Hence, the staff supports establishment of the proposed Institute for a full five-year period. To ensure a smooth transition of the Institute from LSU to UNO, a progress report should be required after one year.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends approval for the proposed National Ports and Waterways Institute at the University of New Orleans, effective immediately, for a period of five years from this date. Simultaneously, the National Ports and Waterways Institute at Louisiana State University and A&M College is hereby terminated.. By March 1, 2002, UNO shall submit to the Commissioner of Higher Education a progress report updating operations of the Institute.